

694.d.16
A
S E R M O N

Concerning the
Natural Immortality of
the S O U L;

Preach'd before the Worshipful
Company of APOTHECARIES,

In the Parish Church of
St. Andrews-Wardrobe, in Black-Friers,
LONDON
Friday the 22nd of September, 1704.

Printed at the Request of the Company

By WILLIAM REEVES, A.M.
Rector of Cranford in Middlesex.

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Printed by W. Doley, for Is. HARRISON at Lin-
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To the Worshipful the
MASTERS and WARDENS

And the rest of that
Ingenious and Useful SOCIETY.

Gentlemen,

I Have been too particularly oblig'd to
your Society, not to comply with your
Request, in Printing what you were
pleas'd to take so kindly from the Pulpit:
But the Importunity of Friends, is an old
Apology, and such a one, as never did, nor
ever will, excuse a Man to the World, for
Printing Himself a Fool; yet every Person
has so much Self-love, as to conclude Him-
self Handsome enough for a Picture, and
is pleas'd with the Fondness of his Friends
in Requesting him to Sit. I have done my
best

The Epistle Dedicatory.

best upon the Subject, and must leave the
Success to God; and I am sensible that Ser-
mons at the Best, are like your Sacred Bit-
ter, necessary indeed to Purge the World,
but Unpalatable, and seldom us'd till We
come to Sickness; however, I am in hopes I
shall come abroad safe under the Protection
of your Judgment; but was I conscious of
more Defects in this Discourse, than I hope
will be found, yet shou'd I publish it upon
your Request with great Satisfaction, be-
cause I had rather be lookt upon as a Weak
Preacher, than an Ungrateful Man.

I am with all Respect

Your most humble and Obedient
Servant
William Frend

Eccles. Cap. III. v. 21, 22.

Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward,
and the Spirit of the Beast that goeth downward
to the Earth? [I cannot answer this Question]
Wherefore I perceive, that there is nothing better,
than that a Man should rejoyce in his own Works,
for that is his Portion. —

The Spirit of Man must be, either Mor-
tal, or Immortal; and there is no-
thing but a Thread of Life, between
us, and Heaven, or Hell, or Annihilation:
Look we never so Big, dispute or drink we,
never so *Profoundly*, we cannot alter the Na-
ture of Things. One of these will be our End,
and Death, which lets us into it, will not be
kept out long, no, not by the *grand Elixir*, not
by your Saving Art, with all the *Life-guards*
in Nature: Nothing more certain than This,
Nothing more Terrible, and it is in vain to
divert it; and therefore whether the Spirit of
Man goeth upward or downward, whether
we are bound for Immortality, or Nothing, is
a Question of such Moment, that our Feeling
must

must be quite lost, not to be concern'd about it; when our Being, our Eternity, our All, lyes at Stake, Indifference upon such a Bet, is Monstrous and Unnatural; for Self-preservation is by Nature so twisted about us, and the Knowledge of Death so unavoidable, and the Anticipations of a future Judgment so stirring in Conscience, that 'tis hardly possible for a Man to be of that accomplish'd Forgetfulness, with all the Arts of Oblivion, as never to feel the Question in the Text rising in his Thoughts, *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward, and the Spirit of a Beast that goeth down to the Earth?*

This Book of the Preacher, is concluded by some, both from the Title and the Subject, to be a Miscellany of Opinions, wherein the King, after he had gone his Round, and perus'd a World of Pleasures, sometimes speaks himself, and sometimes personates, and rallies in the Air of a Libertine, as in the Words before us: Others are of Opinion, that there is no need of this Distinction of Persons, but that the whole Book is capable of a very good Sense without it; I shall not mix in this Dispute, but hope, there will be no Injustice done to the Text, by discoursing upon it in this Method:

1st, By examining the Case, and putting the Immortality of the Soul out of Question; *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man?*

2^{dly}, I will suppose it Questionable, and so consider the Sceptick's Condition, and his Conclusions for Merriment.

And 3^{dly}, I shall lay before you, the Believer's Case; and with a particular Respect to this Occasion, shew his Grounds for Rejoycing, as the Text advises by Way of Inference; *Wherefore I perceive, that there is nothing better than that a Man shou'd rejoyce in his own Works, for that is his Portion.* —

And I perswade my self, I can do nothing more agreeable to your good Design of Meeting in this Place, and beginning the Day with God, than to take you up a while from the Consideration of Bodies, to that of Souls; and entertain you upon this Mount, before you go down to the Joy of Earth, and Business again; for They must conclude their Souls of Flesh, whose Thoughts rise no higher than their Mouths, and the Pleasures of Re-creation; the Thought of Going upward, is

the only *Panacea* here below, of Going where we shall be infinitely above the poor Happiness of Eating and Drinking, above the sad Succession of Sick and Well, and the Bitterness of a Cure, where our very Bodies shall commence as everlasting by Grace, as our Spirits are by Nature.

The Question then propos'd, is concerning the Natural Immortality of the Soul; and for the Determination of this Point, I shall examine the Capability of Matter, the Operations of the Mind, the Instincts of Nature, and the Testimonies of Scripture.

I begin with the Capability of Matter; and upon strict Inquiry, it will be found, that all Matter is the same, and only divisible; and Motion added to this Divisibility, can produce only different Figures, and Relations of Distance: This is all, that a distinct Idea of Matter and Motion presents us with; but Relations of Distance have no Resemblance with Sensation, Desire is not divisible; Perception is neither Round, nor Square, nor has any Mode of Figure belonging to it; the most subtle Particles are no better Disputants than those of a larger Size, or the finest Spirit you draw off, one jot more sensible, than the *Caput mortuum*

tuum that stays behind. It is said indeed, that in the Formation of the *Embryo*, the more sulphureous and inflammable Particles of the seminal Matter, being freed from the saline, and uniting in a convenient *Focus*, are kindl'd into Life: but setting aside the Amusement and Prettinesses of Expression, we shall find Sulphur and Flame, to be no nearer a kin to Life, than Salt and Water; for if we distinctly attend to the Definition of Matter, as Long, Broad, and Thick, we shall find nothing of Life included in these Dimensions, nor in any Motion assignable to them: And therefore a *Compositum* of senseless Particles, by the help of senseless Motion, can no more produce the Perfection of Life, than a Swarm of Bees can crawl about into the Reason of a Man; for it is as impossible, that a greater Perfection should be produc'd from a Less, as for Something to be caus'd by Nothing.

I will not say, that God Almighty cannot make Matter, either Sensible, or Cogitative, because it sounds too shocking for a Man to say, what his Maker cannot do; but I say, it looks like a Contradiction to our clearest Notion of Things, to Father Perception upon That which cannot perceive, to make Matter
and

and Motion the Parents of Life, when we conceive not the least vital Particle belonging to either ; and tho' I cannot answer the Consequence, yet I feel no reason, to quit a clear Notion, for a Consequence attended with some Difficulty ; for allowing Sensation to Beasts, with some degree of Cogitation, and therefore Souls immaterial, and consequently in their own Nature immortal, yet these Souls being of a lower Order, incapable of Freedom and Morality, and consequently improper Subjects of Reward and Punishment ; allowing this, I say, I see nothing so repugnant in supposing God by a general Decree, to have will'd these inferior Spirits into Nothing, upon the dissolution of their Bodies, as the Production of Life from lifeless Matter ; the Violence there seems to be, in making immaterial Beings to dye against their Nature, arises from the Incapacity of Matter, not to be inform'd without them ; and therefore is no Derogation from that Almighty Power, which can do every Thing but Contradiction ; which, with Submission we take to be imply'd in the Case before us.

I know there have been bold Pretences set up, for solving the *Phænomena* of Sensation, by

by local Motion, as bold as the Bills for curing all Diseases by a Medicine, that has no relation to any; but to me, 'tis equally as unintelligible, how Matter shou'd perceive, as how it shou'd joyn that Perception into Reason; and just as possible, for a pure Angel to be turn'd into Stone, as Stone into Thought. However, supposing Life, to be the Issue of Matter and Motion, and not an Efflux from God, who is Life Original, I shall advance something higher in the next place, and touch upon some Operations of the Mind, that seem yet more incommunicable to Matter.

The first of which, is a Power of Animadverting upon the Errors of Sense; and this to me, is a Demonstration of a higher Principle in Man, than meer Sensation; for that which looks over the Senses, and shews them their Error, and corrects the Mistake, must needs be a Principle above that which is corrected.

The Sight is the noblest and most extensive of all the Senses, and yet 'tis a Question, whether any two Men in the World, see exactly alike; for they must see differently, according to the different Convexity of the Crytalline Humor, and its Distance from the Retina: And how come Men to know this, if they
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had nothing wiser than their Eyes? If we argue from our Eyes only, we must with *Epicurus*, (that great Man for the Senses) conclude the Sun a Plane, and no bigger than we see it, tho' the Mind knows it to be spherical, and several thousand times bigger than the Earth: If we judg'd only by the Senses, we shou'd all conclude, as most Men do by their Senses, that Hot and Cold, Bitter and Sweet, and other sensible Qualities, are real distinct Beings from Matter; tho' a Philosopher knows them to be nothing but Sensations in us, arising from the different Contexture of Bodies: And as our Senses cannot set us right in the Proportions of Figure, in Distances, in Qualities of Bodies, &c. so neither in the times of their Motion; for what Eye can measure the Swiftmess of Light, and spy out Eclipses long before they are in being, and unriddle the insensible Motion of the Earth? But the Soul can leave the Senses behind, and keep pace with the Stars, and travel with the Moon, and tell their Stages, and compute their Motions to a Wonder.

But now, were the Senses the only Judges about us, and the Soul nothing but local Motion in the organiz'd Parts of the Body, as a modern

modern Materialist has exprest it, how comes Man more knowing than his Senses? How comes the Soul to see out the Measure of the Sun, which the Eye can never reach, and to judge otherwise of Figure, Qualities, Distances, Motion, &c. than the Senses judge, and to prove them mistaken in all their Judgments? For allowing simple Perception to Matter, yet how Matter can go beyond This, and by a Reflex Act perceive that it does perceive, how Fancy shou'd correct the Extravagances of Fancy, is as hard to apprehend, as how a Looking-glass shou'd correct the Images impress'd upon it, or a Pill purge it self.

Was the Soul as Passive as Matter, and no more Reflexive than the Eye, to which she has been injuriously compar'd, how cou'd she thus re-act upon herself, and think that she thinks, and from thence prove her own Immateriality, which cannot be perceiv'd by Sense, or imagin'd by Fancy? Was the Soul sensitive only, we shou'd all be Philosophers alike, and no more dispute our Senses, than the Beasts that perish; but there is a Self-moving Power in the Mind of Man, by which she surveys her self, and turns over all her Thoughts again, and again, and lanches out into an Infinity of

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Ideas, beyond the Sphere of Sense, and the Flight of Imagination. And this Spirituality of the Understanding is Another Argument for the Immateriality of the Soul; for such as a Thing is, such are its Acts, and such its Objects; a Bodily Substance can go no farther, than Bodily Acts and Objects: That therefore which can form Notions purely Spiritual, and converse with Objects Immaterial, that contemplates God and Spirits, and delights in such Unbodily Company, declares it self of the same Kind with the Beings it flocks to; the Wisdom and Goodness of God, as well as the Nature of Things, require it shou'd be so, for what shou'd Body do, with the Idea of Spirit? or a Mortal with the Notion of Immortality? can the Charms of Speculation counterbalance the Painful Thought, of being no more, hanging like a Dead Weight, perpetually upon the Mind of Man? This Killing Ingredient, like the Dead Fly, in the Oyntment of the Apothecary, wou'd taint all the Enjoyments of Life; and therefore we may conclude, that a wise and good God wou'd not act as unnaturally, as the Tyrant *Mezentius*, in coupling the Living with the Dead, that he wou'd not joyn the Notion of Immortality to a Creature in its own Nature Mortal. The

The Immateriality of the Soul is also prove-
able, from its Freedom of Action; the Soul
must be, either a Substance distinct from Bo-
dy, or a Modification of it; if the latter, then
ev'ry Alteration in Body, arising from a diffe-
rent Position of Parts, and that from Motion,
all our Thoughts must be only the Result of
the Parts of Thinking Matter, thrusting one
upon another: I demand therefore, Whether
the Motion that generates these Thoughts, be
Casual, or Necessary? If Casual, then Reason-
ing is Chance; and 'tis a Lucky Hit only of
Animal Spirits, that the wisest Man speaks
three Words of Sense together; and it is as
hard to conceive how He shou'd will the Spi-
rits thro' the same Traces of the Brain, to make
him remember so many Things past, as how
He shou'd shake at Pleasure, ev'ry Dust of Pow-
der in a Sieve, continually through the same
Holes; this Jog wou'd stir one Thought, that
Another, and a Third perhaps one different
from both; and so poor Man wou'd be perpe-
tually jumbled about *Ixion's* Wheel, from Ob-
ject to Object, from one Will to another: But
how many Fundamental Axioms rise up in the
Soul always the same, upon ev'ry Contem-
plation? how often are the same Specificks
C₂ pre-

prescrib'd for the same Disease? and how many Martyrs have stood unshaken in Mind, after all the Motions that Fire and Sword could make upon their Bodies? If the Motion that begets Thought, be necessary, then farewell Liberty of Speculation and Practice; tho' the various Intreague, and Application to Wisdom and the World, gives Man the Lye, who denies his Freedom, but to excuse his Sin, and plainly proves, that He does not believe himself either Casually, or Necessarily determin'd by some Spherical Particles diversly dispos'd in the Brain; the not Knowing the Manner of Volition, is no more an Argument that we are not Free, than the not Knowing the Nature of Vision, is, that we cannot See.

Conscience is likewise Another most Feeling Argument of our Subsistence after Death; Conscience, that like a Deputed Angel, stands with a Flaming Sword, to keep ev'ry Man out of Hell, and to drive him back upon Heaven; the Hopes and Fears that present themselves to the Mind, upon the Commission of Good or Evil, are the Inward Gospel, a Kind of Natural Prophecy, presaging our Doom in another World; Man alone is the Creature of such Hopes and Fears, because He alone is concern'd after Death.

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Totall which I add the Instincts of Nature. Now Instinct is a blind Impulse, That Spirit in Nature, that urges on to Action in general without seeing the Object; as Hunger inclines to eating, without specifying the Food. Thus a Religious Instinct blindly puts on to Worship, and Reason not holding the Reins, and directing the Impulse, to its proper Object, Man tumbles into Idolatry, which is only an Abuse of the Natural Propensity to Worship in general; and therefore Idolatry cannot be lookt upon as Natural, tho' Religion is. Now Education cannot infuse new Instincts, because it cannot make a new Nature. If then we are Religious by Instinct, and Religion supposes a Life to come, and there is no such Thing, then God has put a Lye in our Nature, and Mankind is a Species of Monsters, having Instincts without Objects, and a strange Extrascency of Passions about a World to come, which they shall never see.

Besides, 'tis notorious, that all Men Living have a Natural Desire to be remember'd when they are Dead, and therefore They call their Lands by their own Names, and provide for a Kind of Immortality, by Monuments and Inscriptions; but we find no Foot-steps of any such

such Desire in the Beasts that perish; and the Reason is, because they perish; and have no Being beyond the Grave. Now supposing the Presages of Conscience, and Instincts of Religion and Immortality, do not directly prove the Immateriality of the Soul, because being Material, It may subsist forever by the Will of God, or be raised again, and so Answer the Suggestions of Both: Yet if we suppose Almighty Powerable to make a Pure Spirit, and Infinite Wisdom to act according to the Nature of Things, then is it reasonable to conclude, that God has made the Soul everlasting in its own Nature, to be a Proper Subject of everlasting Happiness, or Misery; and then the Hopes and Fears of Conscience, and the Instincts of Nature, are good Arguments for the Immateriality of the Soul.

These are all the Arguments I shall urge from Reason, for the Natural Immortality of the Soul; and they are such, as we find the wisest Heathens living upon, with great Assurance, and Satisfaction; for the confirmation of which, I proceed in the last place to the Testimonies of Scripture.

In the beginning of our Bible, we are told, that God made Man after his own Image, which

which Image I look upon as Threefold; a Physical, Moral, and Political Resemblance of God; the Physical Image consisted in the Spirituality of the Soul; the Moral in Holiness, and the Political in Dominion; in these three respects Man resembled his Maker; but making Himself unlike God in Holiness, He was not fit to be like him in Dominion, and God withdrawing the Tree of Life, left his Corruptible Body to the Natural Laws of Motion; but these not affecting the Physical Image of Immateriality, the Soul without a positive Act of Annihilation, *as it was in the Beginning,* is now, and ever shall be, *World without End.*

In the 2d of Gen. v. 7. Moses first lets down the Formation of Man's Body, from the Dust of the Ground, and then adds, in relation to the Soul, That God breathed into his Nostrils, the Breath of Life, which Antithesis plainly speaks the Original of the Soul, generically different from Body. Solomon resolves the Question of the Text in the concluding Chapter, *The Dust shall return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return unto God, who gave it.* This is yet clearer in the Gospel, which has brought Life and Immortality to such a Light, that Men must draw the Curtains very close, to keep

keep it out of their Understanding; for can Words be more express for the Incorruptibility of the Soul, than those of our Lord, *Matt. 10. 28. Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul.* I cou'd wish, that a certain Physician had not practic'd upon this Text against the Soul, for he is not reflected upon here, I dare say, as *One of the Killers of the Body*; however we are commanded not to fear him, and indeed He is a very inoffensive Person at Argument; but I am in hopes, that He goes on writing against the Soul after this Manner, in a short time, we shan't have one Infidel left; tho' I wonder, why that which made *Galen* a Believer, shou'd make any of his Sons an Athiest. Our Saviour asserts the Soul of *Drues* and *Lazarus* to survive their Bodies, which tho' it be a Parable, yet plainly shew the Immortality of the Soul, to be the Christian Doctrine. He commends likewise his own Spirit into the Hands of God, *Luke 23. 46.* and so does *St. Stephen* his, *Acts 7. 59.* *St. Paul* calls God the Father of Spirits, in opposition to the Fathers of the Body; and in *2 Cor. 12. 2.* He says, *he knew a Man, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, He could not tell;* which evidently supposes *St. Paul* to conclude the Soul

a Being capable of Acting without a Body. The Sum of all, I have been arguing for, is This, That a Being that can Think, and Think too upon ev'ry Thing, that can contemplate, True and False, Good and Evil, Matter and Spirit, Past, Present and Future, That can abstract from Time, Place, and ev'ry Corporeal Accident, and act counter to its Passions, That is lifted up with vehement Instincts after Immortality, and has continual Anticipations of Heaven and Hell; a Being, I say, thus appointed, and of a Nature so Active and Spiritual, must needs be a Spirit, or else we shall never know a Spirit by its Operations. Such a Power of Conviction have we for the Everlastingness of the Soul; more than this, wou'd swallow us up in Evidence, and spoil the very Virtue of Believing. And after all this, is it not very sad to see Men doing such daily Violence upon themselves, and in spite of Instinct, Reason, Conscience, and Revelation, taking up their Pens like Mad, to kill their own Souls, and write themselves into Beasts? But Immortality spoils Practice, and therefore it finds so many Bosome Orators to plead against it; they will not have these Powers of the Soul, any more than those of the King, from God, because

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they

they conclude both against the Liberty of the Subject: Did the Practice of these Men, incline them to wish, that Three Angles of a Triangle were not equal to Two Right ones, as much as it inclines them to wish, the Soul not Immortal, we shou'd see as great an Insurrection of Pens against Geometry, as against Religion, and this Venerable Axiom so much quoted, as irreverently disputed, as the Immortality of the Soul. But *Euclid* may reign without Controul, where the Bible cannot; and the Reason is plain, for He has no Lines against any Lust, and the Gospel disturbs them all.

I have now examin'd the Case propos'd, and endeavour'd to put the Immortality of the Soul out of Question, and I have been the longer upon this Head, because it makes me shorter upon the two followings; The 1st of which is to consider the Sceptick's Condition, and his Conclusions for Merriment; *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man, &c.* Wherefore I perceive, that there is nothing better, than that a Man shou'd rejoyce in his own Works, for that is his Portion.

Now Doubting in Matters of Consequence, is a Dark and Restless Posture of Mind, Tumbling about by Turns, upon the two Passions of Hope and Fear; and therefore the Sceptick lyes

ling upon the Fears of Hell, and the Hopes of Nothing; and how he can be Bright and Easy, who can make his Boast, and take his Pastime, in such a dismal Situation of Mind, is a Creature so extravagant, that Words cannot describe him. Infidelity is a Work of Time, and costs the Man a deal of Pain, to fence out Reflection, to manage Conscience and Reason, and put both under Contribution to his Lust; the Way of Arguing, is to shut fast the Eyes, and then conclude against the Light; his Blind Hopes and Crackling Joys, are like those of a Drunken Malefactor, with the Cap upon his Eyes, thinking himself secure, for not seeing his Executioner. If we observe the Advances of Infidelity, and the Opiumes that are taken, to sleep upon Thorns; and to extract Mirth from such Lamentable Principles; if, I say, we ask but the Unthinking Creature for the Reasons of his Adventure, he expresses himself so weakly, upon a Question so important, that one must have all the Charity of that Gospel he despises, not to leave him in his Folly. The Man grows first Extravagant in Practice, and then Wild in speculation; he first begins to break the Commandments, and then to dispute the Creed; and with in his Heart, there is no God, and then

to swear by that God, there is none: He puffs at a Substance Incorporeal, for a Contradiction in Terms; and at the Stories of Spirits, for the Legend of the Nursery; and the Fears of Conscience, for the Fictions of Children in the Dark: He pronounces Religion a Tale of a Tub, trump up for the Good of Kings, and kept in Play by the Interest of Priests; Blessed, for ever Blessed in his Jest, and Insur'd if he can but doubt! He tells you, there are Cunning Foxes, as well as Cunning Men; that Beasts do Reason wisely, and Indulge freely, without the Hazard of Immortality; and why shou'd he frame that Hazard to himself? Thus Arm'd, the Giant sets forth for the Conquest of the other World, and with the *Leviathan* going before him, like *Goliath's* Shield-bearer, defies the Armies of God and Reason; and after all this Figure of Learning and Assurance, the Poor Wretch can account for nothing; he knows not who sent him into the World, nor what the World is, nor what he himself is; he knows no Beginning, or End; no Beauty or Contrivance in all the Works of Creation and Providence; all he knows, is, that he must shortly dye, but cannot tell, whether he is to vanish into soft Air, or drop into everlasting Fire: This in short,

the Unbelievers Condition, full of Darkness, full of Misery; from whence he concludes it, the wisest Method, to melt down the Present, without thinking on the Future; to untye all his Appetites, and secure himself by Day, in the Business or Pleasure of the World, and to lose himself at Night, in the Liquors of Oblivion. But supposing the Sceptick with Probability on his side, why shou'd he take such delight, to proclaim the News, and brazen it over with Confidence, and Gayety? Is it a Matter of Sport and Triumph, to think the Soul evaporates, or is it not the saddest Thought under Heaven? Yet such is the Corruption of Nature, sublin'd by Art, that we not only see Unbelievers priding themselves in utter Darkness, but Others also, concluding it Brave, to seem to be in the same unhappy State, who are not really Wicked enough for the Degree of Infidel; and of the many Atheists, the most, I believe are of this Set, who only act the Monster, and put on the Mask of Infidelity, because they are told, 'tis Casting off the Yoke, and Pedantry of Conscience; and that it looks like the Gallantry of the Age, to stand it out, in defiance of Heaven: And I can appeal to none better than your selves for the Truth of this; for how many

many Persons have you seen quite of another Mind in their dying Hours, to what they were in the Spring of Life? For in a Bed of Sickness, the Vizard drops off, and our naked Meaning appears; then the Season of Wit and Jollity is over, and the Patient opens his Heart, and you have the Anatomy of all his Thoughts; then he throws up his Mire like the troubl'd Sea, and in febrile Sadness confesses, that he wou'd now give the World in exchange for that Soul, he valu'd the other Day at Nothing.

To conclude, Infidelity is a Precipice we arrive at with Pain, and view with Horror, 'tis at the best such a Ground for Rejoycing, as if the Master of a Ship shou'd tell his Passengers, He saw a Storm a coming, but bid 'em never trouble their Heads about it, but Cheer up, and make the best of the Wine and Brandy before 'em, for by and by, they shou'd sink for ever: Sinking for ever! is no such pleasing Consideration, but if we shou'd chance to find our selves alive in the Deep, in that Deep, where not one Drop is to be begg'd, either to Refresh or Stupifie, but where we must lie Naked under the eternal lashes of our own Folly, and the positive Inflictions of Almighty Justice, here we shou'd make no doubt, but it had been the wiser

wiser Course to have bethought our selves be-
times, and upon the Supposition of Chance, to
have prevented the Possibility of coming to
this Place of Torment, where for a few Years
of tumultuous Joy, there is Weeping, and Wail-
ing and Gnashing of Teeth, forever, and ever.
Turn then again unto thy Rest, O my Soul, for
the Lord hath rewarded thee; Let the Liber-
tine riot in his Madness, and his Nothing, but
do Thou make the best of the World with Inno-
cence, enjoy the Present, and secure the Future,
and be assur'd from *Balaam*, that He who will
not live the Life, heartily wishes to die the Death
of the Righteous, and for his latter end to be
like His.

I come now in the last place, to lay before
You the Believer's Case, and with Respect to
this Occasion, shew his Grounds for Rejoycing,
as the Text advises by way of Inference, *Where-
fore I perceive, that there is nothing better, than
that a Man should rejoyce in his own Works, for
that is his Portion.*

Now the Believer stands upon sure Ground,
and by the Advantage of his Faith looks back-
ward, and forward, from one World to Ano-
ther, with Security on every Side; the more
He examines his Choice, the more He approves
his

his Judgment; and this Foundation of Mind, is that alone, we can build any solid Joy upon, and that which must give the true Relish to all the Blessings of Providence; and this being laid, as I need not question by the Example before us, I shall propose some Reasons for a Man's Rejoycing in his own Works, which is so good a Thing, that the Wisdom of Solomon perceiv'd nothing better.

And first, Rejoycing is a Duty, as it is an Expression of Gratitude, which is a Vertue arising from a Sense of Good, as receiv'd from Another, with a thankful Acknowledgment of it, as such: Now no Man that owns a God, but must own himself infinitely oblig'd; but you, by your own Works, are particularly put in Mind, to joyn with the *Psalmist* in a grateful Acknowledgment of the Divine Goodness, *That has given Me ome to heal the Sick*, that when the most Holy God was forc'd to remove the Tree of Life, in compliance with that Justice, that sentenc'd Dust to Dust again, yet in Mercy has still left so many Trees for Salvation and Pleasure, and Remedies sown up and down so thick in Nature, on purpose to sweeten the Curse of Pain, and in some measure to repair the Ruins of Original Sin. Such Societies there-

therefore, that do not take Occasion, like You, of Rejoycing before the Lord, are Ungrateful to Providence, and burn that Incense to their own Drag, which is the Due of Heaven; but This your Morning Devotion turns the succeeding Joy into a Sacrifice, to that Divine Goodness, from whence You confessedly derive all the Blessings upon your Selves, and your Fraternity.

Besides, 'tis highly unbecoming Creatures of Immortal Hopes, and Servants of so good a Lord, always to wear the Livery of Sadness, and by disfiguring our Faces, to look that Religion out of Countenance, which commands us to Rejoyce evermore; at certain Seasons of the Year, you see a Universal Joy spread upon the Face of Nature, the Valleys are said to Laugh and Sing, the Birds seem to Return their Maker and Offering of Musick, and the Beasts to express an Air of Gratitude, upon new Incomes of Pleasure; and are We then to be the only silent sullen Things in Nature? Are We not infinitely more oblig'd by the Pre-eminence of Reason, by the Blood of Christ, and by This Fruitful Year of Victories, after so long a Famine, and to serve the Lord with Gladness, and to endeavour the Gratifying

fyng our Almighty Benefactor, by a Chosen Joy, as well as the Animal World does by Instinct?

But then farther, as Rejoycing is a Welcome Testimony of a Grateful Mind, and the Goodness of that Master we serve, so is it a Duty we are led to by the Order of Nature, as well as the Command of God; for Nature has made it impossible, not to be joyfully affected with agreeable Sounds and Tasts, and with Objects adapted to the other Senses; and she has likewise interwoven a Delight in ev'ry Work of Art and Virtue; and upon this account I take it, the Preacher perceiv'd nothing better than for a Man to rejoyce in his own Works, for it is his Portion; the Gift of God, He calls it in another place: It is the Dowry, which Nature gives him with his Labour and weddeth him to his Work; This persuades the Undertaking, sweetens the Prosecution, and crowns the End for Instance, Your own Art is a Drudgery indeed, but then, like the Chymical Labours of the Bee, 'tis distilling Sweetness in every Operation, For is it not a Pleasing Toil to examine the Amazing Structure of the wildest Insect, to travel through the several Kingdoms of Nature to converse with the Animal, the Vegetative, and the Mineral World, and to see the Force of Fire make them confess those Latent Virtues, which they would not disclose upon a less Provocation? Is it not very Entertaining, to find out the Wonders of Proportion, the Mystery of Disarming Poisons, and Ballancing the several Powers of Medicine, and by Virtue of that Mixture and Consideracy to enable them to drive out those Deadly Enemies that lay waste the Land of the Living? And does not the Satisfaction rise higher yet, by Turning your Art into Virtue? Do not you ease your selves, when you ease poor Patient, and Ruminatè with Complacency upon your Private and Publick Contributions, for the Sick and Needy

Needy ^{But} Now this Complacency, is your present Por-
 tion, the Natural Recompence of that Charity, which,
 like your own Antimony, loses nothing by Communica-
 tion; and therefore not Rejoycing, is a sort of Cross-
 grain'd Immortality; by which we displease our selves, to
 disappoint the Designs of God, in Resisting that Order
 of Nature, which has annex'd a Delight to ev'ry Work
 of Art and Virtue. Besides, there is a Complexional
 Sadness possesses many Men like the Evil Spirit in the Go-
 spel, cutting them with their own unhappy Thoughts,
 and driving them to Mountains, and Tombs, from the
 Society of Mankind; now Reason is a bad Receipt for
 the Spleen, and Melancholy, but the worse for Argu-
 ment; *as Merry Idiot you have heard, is the Medicine pre-*
scribed by Solomon, and God has given Wine on purpose
 to gladden it, to make such Gloomy Persons acceptable
 to Themselves, and useful to the World; and therefore
 it must needs be a Duty to Rejoyce, because the Creator
 has expressly given this Very Thing for the Promotion of
 it. There are likewise so many accidental Crosses and
 Disappointments in the World, and both Body and Mind
 sometimes so jaded with Business, that 'tis not possible to
 go on, without Baiting by the Way, and Refreshing our
 wearied Spirits. *as that of Paul's Letter*
 Now if it be so good and necessary for a Private Man
 to Rejoyce in his own Works, it is much more so for
 Societies to do the like, for by this They live and move
 and keep up their Being; without such Publick Rejoy-
 cings, there can be no Circulation in so great a Body, no
 Communication of Counsel or Charity, for Reviving the
 decay'd Members, and for the Order and Support of the
 whole Community. This Chearful Solemnity brings you
 together, and breeds good Blood, and begets and nurses
 up a Publick Spirit of Friendship, by weeding out that
 Selfish-

Selfishness, that loves to inhabit little Minds, and cramp noble Designs: Upon these Occasions Men generally put on their best Tempers, as they do their best Cloaths, and the Publick Joy improves and ripens them: This is the Alkaly that corrects and sweetens that Acid Humour which even good Men are apt to contract in Private: In a word, such Annual Rejoycings, begun with Religion, and ended with Moderation, are well-pleasing both to God and Man; it is your Portion, the Work of your Hands, and the Blessings of Providence, such a Cheerfulness as your Society cannot subsist without, tis like the Returning Sun after a hard Winter, that animates the World with new Life, and puts the Joyces of the Earth into a proper Ferment, and makes Provision for the Beauty and Abundance of the succeeding Year. But I shall detain you no longer from the Business of the Day, but only leave this Caution upon your Minds, which the Royal Preacher has left in *Eccles. vi. 9. Rejoyce, O young Man in thy Youth, and let thy Heart cheer thee in the Days of thy Youth, and walk in the Ways of thy Heart, and in the Sight of thine Eyes: but know that for all these things, God will bring thee into Judgment.*

And the very God of Peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole Spirit and Soul and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

And keep up their being without such Publick Rejoycing, there can be no Circulation in so great a Body, no Communication of Counsel or Charity, for Reviving the decay'd Members. In the Order and support of the whole Community. This cheerful solemnity brings you together, and breeds good Blood and begets and nurses up a Publick Spirit of Friendship by wedding out that Selfish

